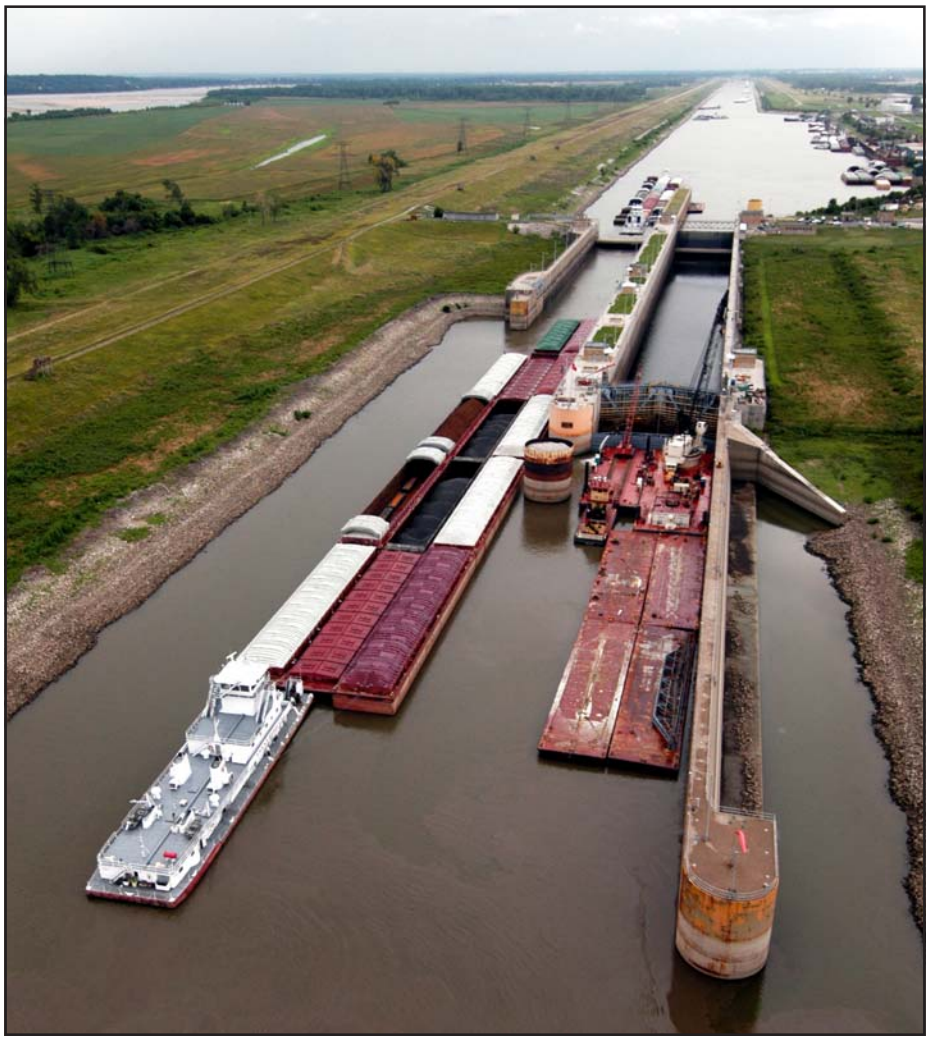
ST. LOUIS ARMY ENGINEER DISTRICT

ESPRIT

Vol. 43 No. 8/9 www.mvs.usace.army.mil August/September 2004



Crane Sewell and other Corps of Engineers heavy equipment (R) works feverishly to carry out emergency repairs on the miter gates of the 1200-foot main chamber at Chain of Rocks Locks 27. Fifteen-barge tows had to endure double cut lockages through the Locks' 600-foot auxiliary chamber for 16-plus days.

Major Interstate Waterway is Cut to "One Lane" by Emergency Repairs

Make no mistake; the Mississippi River is an interstate thoroughfare. It's not paved with asphalt or concrete, but a tremendous quantity of the nation's commerce travels on it. When the main 1200-foot chamber of the Chain of Rocks Locks 27 had to be closed for emergency repairs Monday, July 26, it was like reducing any major interstate highway to one lane.

The closure was made necessary when seven of 16 critical tensioning rods and nuts at the top of the 70-foot-tall miter gates were noted to be broken or missing.

The massive threaded rods and nuts had kept the gates from twisting and warping as they were opened and closed thousands of time every year. They might not have continued to serve much longer. But we will never have to know. They have been replaced.

At 6:40 a.m., MV (Motor Vessel) George King and her 15-barge tow passed southbound to become the last tow to transit that chamber before it was closed for emergency repairs.

The effect on commerce on the nation's inland waterways serving the upper Midwest was immediate and severe. Within hours, tows began increasingly lengthy waits to transit the single, shorter remaining auxiliary 600-foot chamber. What had been an efficient, if aging, interstate thoroughfare had been cut to "one lane."

An average of 85 million tons of farm commodities and industrial raw materials pass through Locks 27 - the first or last locks depending on your direction, on a system that includes the Missouri, Upper Mississippi and Illinois Rivers. Before the main chamber's gates were repaired, waits would surpass 48 hours - with more than 40 tows waiting, engines running, crews being paid, food being eaten...

For 16 days, 11 hours and 15 minutes, engineers and maintenance experts from the St. Louis District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers struggled to repair the gates.

Finally, at 5:50 p.m., Wednesday, August 11, 15 barges, pushed by MV

Emergency Repairs Cont. page 3

Commander's Perspective

COL Kevin Williams

Anyone who has lived in Europe knows that continent virtually closes for business in August as its nearly 300 million citizens go on "holiday," or vacation. August 2004 certainly wasn't vacation time in the St. Louis District.

Actually we started a little early when we closed the main 1200-foot chamber at Locks 27 on the Chain of Rocks Canal for emergency repairs, July 26.

The miter gates of that venerable facility were deteriorating and the combined Con-Ops and Engineering team here, at Division, and Headquarters responded to stave off possible catastrophic failure, finding the necessary funds for critical repairs.

A team of District experts, supplemented by contract divers, took on the job, 12 hours a day, 7 days a week. We worked closely with the navigation industry to help minimize impacts and plunged ahead. Critical decisions were made in real time; a lot of hard work was accomplished in a risk-intolerant atmosphere, all without a single accident or injury. Seventeen days later, the job was done.

The locks continued to serve throughout, pushing a record 22 tows through the auxiliary chamber in one 24-hour period, with the aid of industry-supplied helper boats.

In the middle of this frenzied activity, a powerful congressional delegation flew in to observe this specific work and to get an overview of the growing deferred maintenance challenge on our inland waterways. That visit itself took a monumental effort and went extraordinarily well.

Meanwhile, as this project continued, the District also hosted the annual U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Senior and Emerging Leaders Conference. The large majority of the Corps' general officers, including our new Chief, Lt. Gen. Carl Strock, and the SES'ers came here to focus on the future direction of the Corps and to train those who will take us there.

In the end, this high-visibility conference, an event of incredible complexity, came off with flawless precision. It did so because an awesome PDT, supported by everyone they called on, whatever the request, made it happen that way. The District was like the proverbial duck: serene and composed on the surface and paddling like hell underwater.

Seamlessly blended into this month, Dredge Potter got underway to start the season's channel maintenance work as the Mississippi River begins its traditional late summer period of lower water and navigation challenges.

And, oh yes, how can we forget the annual Low Water inspection with the Mississippi River Commission and our new Division Commander, BG Robert Crear, embarked aboard the Motor Vessel Mississippi? That went extraordinarily well too.

The St. Louis Corps Family accomplished this all shorthanded. More than 40 of our people are serving from Iraq and Afghanistan to Florida, where the Corps of Engineers is on the FEMA team to relieve the hurricane misery there.

It would take an entire column to repeat the praise being sent our way for this month of dedicated, successful work. In fact, I'd name you all District Employees of the Month if I wasn't sure that GSA would blow a gasket when we took over the entire back parking lot for a month!

I am extremely proud of all of you. Your professionalism, your can-do attitudes and the shear joy you demonstrated at being the best that you can possibly be - at all times and under any circumstances - has shined brightly for all to see.

Traditionally, I end my monthly message to you with the Corps' motto, Essayons - Let Us Try. But instead, this month I will sign off with a paraphrase of a famous shoe ad, telling you all, "You Just Did It." Thank you.

US Army Corps of Engineers
St. Louis District®

ESPRIT is an unofficial publication authorized under the provisions of AR 360-1. It is published monthly, by contract, in 1450 copies, by the Public Affairs Office, US Army Engineer District, St. Louis. Views and opinions expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of the Department of the Army.

District Commander ---------- COL C. Kevin Williams

Chief, Public Affairs ---------- Alan J. Dooley

Editor ---------- Nicole M.Dalrymple

Address mail to: US Army Engineer District, St. Louis, ATTN: CEMVS-PA, 1222 Spruce, St. Louis, MO 63103-2833, Phone (314) 331-8095

In This Issue

Emergency lock repairs
Cont. from page 1

Jack B. Wofford heralded reopening the larger of the facility's two lock chambers by begining a northbound transit.

The work was made necessary by repeated fatigue and breaking of bolt-like rods on the gate that had reached the point at which District engineers and operations personnel feared a catastrophic failure of the gates.

As winter of 2004 had given way to spring and summer, one after the other of the rods gave way. Finally, the upper left cross member of the Missouri-side gate was secured by only one of four tensioning rods; the others were broken.

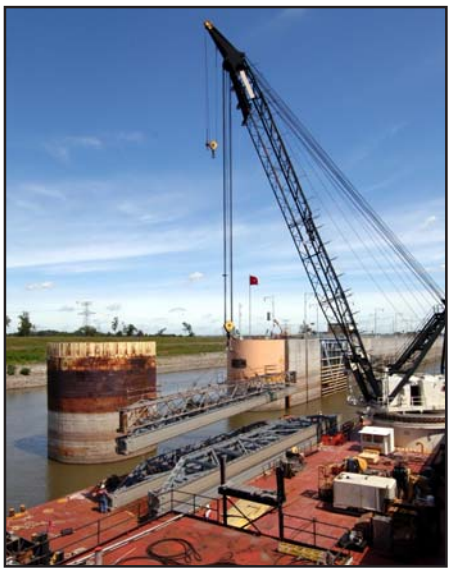
"I sent a pretty blunt assessment forward at that point," Rivers Project Operations Manager Stan Ebersohl said. "I was very concerned about failure of the gates, but I was even more worried about safety. If that last bolt failed the steel cross brace could have fallen on a deck hand below."

Money had to be found to permit emergency replacement of the critical parts. The work was projected to cost approximately $830,000.

The District immediately began consulting with key leaders in the commercial navigation industry that would be impacted during closure of the lock chamber for repairs. Initially it was planned that the lock would close for a 14-day period starting July 12.

The barge industry shuffled assets, scheduling higher priority shipments first and repositioning towboats to the Ohio River where lock deterioration at the McAlpine Locks was going to close that facility a few weeks later.

Plans called for moving as many tows through Locks 27's auxiliary lock chamber, and adjacent 600-foot long lock during the closure. It is impossible to lock the standard 15-barge tows through a 600-foot in one piece, or "cut." Rather, each tow must be locked through in two sections, or cuts. Nine barges are first pushed into the 600-foot chamber, manually separated from the tow and then raised or lowered to the next level. Next the towboat and remaining six barges pass through the lock. Finally the two cuts must be reassembled in backbreaking manual labor before heading up or downstream.



U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Crane Sewell easily lifts another stop log which will form part of a temporary cofferdam to enable maintenance personnel to repair miter gates at Locks 27.

Normally the 600-foot chamber at Locks 27 is used for smaller tows and

Pete Coleman (L) from the St. Louis District Service Base "talks" a crane operator behind and below him to maneuver tons of steel into a narrow slot in the lock wall. William Redecker manhandles the device over the final fractions of an inch as it is lowered.

other vessels. So unlike its 600-foot counterparts to the north, this chamber does not have an electric motor winching, or haulage system to help pull the first "cuts" from the chamber. Thus, to make "two-cut" lockages through that chamber, industry-supplied helper boats - smaller towboats - had to be supplied 24 hours a day throughout the repair period. This was costly, but there was no alternative.

As July 12th approached, another challenge emerged.

Locks 27 sit deeply into the Mississippi River. In fact, the 70-foot-tall miter gates at each of their south ends are the tallest on the river. Normally the

Sometimes just getting to work can be an adventure, St. Louis District U.S. Army Corps of Engineers employees learn as they start the long descent to the bottom of the Chain of Rocks miter gates.

chambers are filled some 35-feet deep, and are drained no more than 21 feet to reach the lowest elevation of the river below. Also normally, the water within the chamber counterbalances the pressure of the surrounding land and water. The concrete walls of the lock provide the margin of strength between the inside and outside pressures under operating conditions.

But when the chamber is to be drained to the bottom - an elevation of about 360 feet above the NGVD (National Geodetic Vertical Datum, or roughly mean sea level), both the elevation of the river and the water in the ground must be below specific levels.

As the July 12th closure date approached the Mississippi remained unseasonably high. It had to be announced: the closure would be delayed. Again, to help accommodate industry scheduling needs, a date had to be chosen well in advance. July 26th was reset for the closing.

In the final countdown to that day, District water control experts closely watched the Mississippi River's elevation. They watched weather to the north. They monitored run-off patterns. They waited and watched. The predictions were made: the river would come down enough to get this job underway.

And the Mississippi adhered to the predictions and fell. Unfortunately the ground water north and east of the lock didn't follow the river's lead.

"We routinely monitor ground water elevations on a monthly basis," said St. Louis District Instrumentation, Soils and Materials engineer Ed Demsky. But as the lock closure's date approached, "We were surprised to see that the water in the ground was not coming down as fast as in the River," Demskey reported. (see accompanying story) "We understood what we saw in theory, but it still surprised us to see it for real."

This led to altering plans for the work to be accomplished. With the continued elevated water levels within the land adjacent to the locks it became apparent that it would be impossible to lower water levels within the lock and between the stop logs separating the river water from the outside of the gates enough to unwater the bottoms of the gates.

Based on diver inspections, it had been noted that the tensioning rods on the gates' bottoms were in much better shape. In fact, only one of 15 was missing compared with the 7 of 16 failure rate on the top.

A series of onsite consultations between engineers and experienced maintenance were held. U.S. Army Corps of Engineers headquarters in Washington, entered into the process and the decision was made: change the top tensioning rods and leave the bottom rods alone. Then send the divers down one more time to confirm that the bottom rods were still as previously noted.

The tensioning rods attach each end of two pairs of x-shaped cross braces, to the respective lock gates. The rods must be stressed by hydraulic jacks as they are installed and large steel nuts are snubbed down to hold the tension against the gates' corners. There are a total of 32 on the two gates: 16 on the top and 16 more on the bottom. They function to keep the gates from warping, twisting and settling out of square as they are opened and closed.

As repairs moved ahead, lockages continued at a frantic rate through the 600-foot auxiliary chamber. "We completed 22 lockages in one 24 hour period," reported Lockmaster Ed Rogers. "Everything went perfectly. The helper boat played a good role. The whole team was extremely focused."

While the number of lockages was a record for operations in the 600-foot chamber, everyone concerned was greatly relieved when the main chamber returned to business late on the afternoon on August 11. Deck personnel on MV Jack B. Wofford with her tow of 15 barges were visible relieved as they entered the just-reopened 1200-foot chamber - all in one piece.

At points during the closure, Rogers reported more than 40 tows waited north and south of Locks 27. "They were waiting as long as 54 hours to pass through," he noted. "I don't know what this cost the navigation industry, but they weren't making money sitting in the harbor and canal for north and southbound transits," he added.

The situation was compounded by an unrelated incident when a loaded barge sank in the navigation channel in St. Louis after it broke loose from a southbound tow and hit the Poplar Street Bridge. It went down about 100 feet

No "Erector Set" here – lock master Ed Rogers shows the scale of the parts being replaced as he exhibits the giant nuts that will maintain tension on the mitergate's new diagional braces.

north of the McArthur Railroad Bridge, with about 100 feet of its bulk extending into the navigation channel. A series of Coast Guard-directed harbor restrictions and closures stymied traffic heading both directions as it either completed passing through the 600-foot auxiliary chamber at Locks 27 or headed into a growing north bound queue.

Stan Ebersohl, who oversees operation and maintenance of the District's locks and dams, said the entire operation went very well. Of course, we'd like to have changed the bottom rods too, but river and ground water levels prevented that."

Pete Coleman, Service Base Yard and Shops supervisor echoed that sentiment: "I wanted to get both ends done. I like to finish a job when I start it," he said.

Ebersohl attributed much of the success to the human factor. "We have a group of people who combine experience with pride. They've fixed gates before. They've changed them too. They are also very customer oriented and understand how what they do impacts on our primary customers at the locks - the navigation industry. They know that when the locks are down costs skyrocket for the users.

Coleman attributed that experience to the way the maintenance personnel worked with lock operators to solve problems that emerged. "Finding bent metal in the bulkhead slots stymied us at first, but we quickly determined a fix and the divers executed the plan with underwater cutting torches. We also had trouble getting the first stop log (bulkhead element) to seat, but we solved that one too," he noted.

St. Louis District Chief of Construction and Operations, Peggy O'Bryan also cited industry cooperation in the work's success. "We talked constantly with them. We shared what we knew, as we knew it, with total transparency," she said. "They understood our challenges and supported us. In turn, we weighed their concerns in all of our decisions."

She also lauded the engineers who made an endless stream of assessments and calculated decisions and the District's operations and maintenance people who wielded the wrenches, lifted and positioned heavy machinery and equipment and carried out the challenging tasks. "I want to commend Pete Coleman's crew from the Service Base. Teamed up with lock personnel, they performed exceptional work" O'Bryan said. "It's important to have skilled trades and craftsman in our workforce. I was especially proud of the attention to safety - they worked long hard hours day after day without one accident."

"We cut two days off the time line when after weighing the factors, we decided to tension the rods at the same time we were repairing cracks we had identified during inspections," she noted. "That was great, smart team work." She went on to say, "these locks have remained in service and were returned to service by some of the hardest-working, smartest, most dedicated people anyone could ever want to meet."

Within 48 hours of reopening the main 1200-foot chamber at Chain of Rocks Locks 27, the river traffic that backed up rapidly dissipated until normalcy returned. "From opening on the 11th, we locked 51 tows using both the 1200-foot and 600-foot chambers in the following 24 hours," Lockmaster Rogers said, citing this as breaking a previous record of 45. "Again, it was good weather, good luck and focus," he said. A total of 90 tows carrying some 967,000 tons of commodities passed through both chambers in the 42 hours following the large chamber's reopening.

"These locks continue to function well," Con-Ops Chief O'Bryan said. "They were designed as well as we knew how at the end of World War II. They were built the best way we knew how then too," she added.

But Stan Ebersohl was less optimistic about future similar work. "The guys who carried this work out are nearing retirement. They've gained their experience through doing this kind of work many times and for many years. Unfortunately, most of them will be gone in the near future."

Ebersohl noted that the aging work force is not being regenerated from below. "We used to employ 40 people at the Service Base. They started at very basic apprentice levels and grew with experience. The Service Base and Dredge Crews were sources of people to

"We're open for business," lock master Ed Rogers, tells the navigation industry at 5:50 p.m., August 11. Corps of Engineers workers had just finished 16-plus consecutive days carrying out emergency repairs to the Locks 27 main chamber miter gates.

move up and operate the locks. But those sources have all but dried up."

Could the work have been done faster with less impact? Ebersohl reports that this could have been done by bringing in outside support from other districts. "But when you bring people in like that, you have to add travel, housing and other costs to the normal cost of doing business." He also noted that much of the work required daylight, so the 12 - hour schedule was effective and efficient. He also noted that this time, the weather cooperated. "It didn't rain and it was only hot the first couple of days."

But in the end, Chain of Rocks Locks 27 and their machinery are 51 years old. They pass 85 million tons of cargo a year. These lock gates are cycled thousands of time a year in searing heat and freezing cold. They operate 24 hours a day, every day, all year, including on Christmas. They are the only way into or out of the Mississippi, Missouri and Illinois Rivers. They are quite simply, essential to the economic health of a large portion of the upper Midwest.

Unfortunately Chain of Rocks Locks isn't the only place where massive machinery and parts are aging and deteriorating. "This is pretty characteristic of the entire inland waterway system," Ebersohl concluded. "It's like the oil filter commercial about paying now or later; and it's later."

The future and its tough decisions may be closer than we had thought and currently may hope. These choices can only be deferred for so long. The long, costly waits to lock through Chain of Rocks Locks 27 have ended - for now.

High-powered Congressional Visit to Chain of Rocks Locks 27

One day before reopening the main 1200-foot chamber at Chain of Rocks Locks 27, a congressional delegation accompanied by an assistant Army secretary visited that facility to review work there and to learn more about the general condition of navigation facilities on the nation's inland waterways.

The delegation included Congressman David Hobson (R-OH), who chairs the House Energy and Water Development Subcommittee. Hobson was accompanied by Congressman Kenny Hulshof (R-MO). They were escorted by Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works) John Woodley, Jr.

The delegation toured the facility and queried District Engineer Col. Kevin Williams, USA; District Operations and Maintenance Chief Stan Ebersohl and Lockmaster Ed Rogers about specifics of the emergency repairs there. Their walking tour took them from the lock walls to the lock's miter gates where they saw firsthand the repairs that had been accomplished.

(L) Project Manager Brian Kleber listens as Congressman David Hobson asks questions during a visit to Chain of Rocks Locks 27 to review emergency repairs on the lock's main chamber miter gates.

(L) Chief of Construction Operations Peggy O'Bryan, Rivers Project Operations Manager Stan Ebersohl, Congressman David Hobson and Service Base Yards and Shops Supervisor Pete Coleman discuss emergency repairs at the Locks 27 main chamber.

From there they went below ground for a close-up view of the aging machinery that operates the locks lift gates and other equipment. There, Ebersohl discussed ongoing wear on the giant gears and other equipment, as well as near-term plans to replace some of it.

Assistant Secretary Woodley took the opportunity to visit some of the District Service Base and lock maintenance crew that performed the critical work on Locks 27 and praised their diligence and hard work. He was especially complementary of Pete Coleman, who headed up the team that carried out the repairs.

Congressman Hobson, who was in town to take part in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Senior Leaders - Emerging Leaders Conference departed for his return flight to Ohio immediately after the visit.

Piezometers, an Important part of Hydrologic Engineering.

Piezometer: *a remote sensing device to measure pressure or groundwater elevation.* "So what," you might ask.

When the miter gates at Locks 27 needed emergency repairs recently, a series of yellow pipes reaching deep into the ground around the facility at the foot of the Chain of Rocks Canal, came into play. Called piezometers, these fence-post-sized pipes with threaded caps on their tops, enabled project staff to measure the elevation of ground water.

By removing these caps, technicians can drop measuring devices down until electrical contacts at their ends are closed by touching water. Then the wire's length is measured and they know the elevation of the water in the ground below. And that turned out to be mighty important.

Ed Demksy, of the District Instrumentation, Soils and Materials section of the Geotech Branch brought great quiet, and then energetic discussion to a meeting of engineers and maintenance experts gathered in early July, to discuss the upcoming emergency repairs at Locks 27.

As reported elsewhere in *Esprit*, the cross braces on the miter gates at the south end of the main 1200-foot lock chamber there were in danger of failing. The plan called for replacing all 32 of the wrist-sized threaded steel tensioning rods that secure the braces to the gate and transfer torsional, or twisting loads to the braces.

The bottom ends of the braces on the 70-foot tall gates are normally underwater. So maintenance experts installed bulkheads, called stop logs, on each end of the locks, outside of the gates. These would enable the entire lock chamber to be dewatered, exposing both sides of the gates.

"Not so fast," was in essence what Ed Demsky informed the assembled experts at their meeting.

Under normal conditions, water

Roland Murdock shows how it is possible to measure water levels at the bottom of a small pipe in the ground. He lowers the probe in his right hand on a wire from the spool in his other had. When the probe touches water, the red light on the spool lights up and he reads the measurement from a scale marked on the wire.

elevations in the lock chamber may vary up to 22 feet. Pressures from outside the chamber, from the river water, the soil and ground water are balanced by the water inside the lock.

But when the chamber must be pumped down enough to expose the lower ends of the braces - some 35 or 40 feet to elevation 360 feet - there must be similarly lower water levels in the river and in the surrounding ground. Otherwise there is excess pressure on the outside of the lock chamber and the margin of strength represented by the concrete walls can be exceeded. In other words, the lock walls can be pushed in, or tipped if there is too much water pressure on the outside.

It is easy to imagine the river as a channel full of water, setting in dry ground. However, that's not the case. The river extends in the form of an aquifer - or body of ground water - for a considerable distance inland.

One might expect that as the river's elevation drops, there would be a similar and simultaneous drop in the ground. That water would simply run out into the river.

However, in this case, engineers knowing that water elevations were critical, called for a view of the ground water on a frequent basis.

Demsky said that the pipes are set in sand at their bottoms where we expect to find water. Small perforations allow water to enter, but not the sand around them.

That's the simple description. Actually, at Locks 27, many of the piezometers must incorporate perforations at multiple levels, because the soil on the land side of the locks was placed there by dredging, vice being dumped in from the land side. "It was laid down in multiple layers, coming from the dredge in the form of the water-sand-silt slurry that we see during normal dredging in an alluvial or sand-bottom river. It settled in layers with coarser, heavy materials falling out first, followed by smaller particles that settled last. The finer materials are less permeable, so we have to be able to check for water elevations at a number of points," Demsky said.

"We expected the ground water to drop with the river elevation," but in theory, if the aquifer is very large, or if the soil doesn't permit water to flow easily, ground water levels can lag behind the river both as the river rises and falls. That was the case here.

Over the long term, we have monitored the piezometers monthly," Demsky said. "But as we approached dewatering, we increased the frequency to daily readings. That's when we got more detailed measurements and the relatively surprising picture of the flow back and forth to and from the river."

So now *Esprit* readers know what piezometers are and why they are vital to operating near the Mississippi River. They enable technicians to accurately measure water elevations that would otherwise be out of reach. And in this case, water we could not see could definitely have hurt us.

Now you know the rest of the story.

Mississippi River Commission Conducts Low Water Inspection, Hearing

From the Flood Control Act of the Seventieth Congress, 1928, concerning the work of the Mississippi River Commission (MRC):

"... the commission shall make inspection trips of such frequency and duration as will enable it to acquire first-hand information as to conditions and problems germane to the matter of flood control within the area of its jurisdiction; and on such trips of inspection ample opportunity for hearings and suggestions shall be afforded persons affected by or interested in such problems."

Actually, since the MRC's establishment in 1879, it has conducted semi-annual inspection tours of the length of the Mississippi River - the high water in the south during the spring, when traditionally river stages have made it difficult to navigate under bridges across the river and the low water inspection in late summer when river stages have been lower.

This year - on the occasion of the 125th anniversary of the MRC, the commission, headed up by its new President and new Mississippi Valley Division Commander, Brig. Gen. Robert Crear - traveled the St. Louis District section of the river, aboard MV Mississippi, on August 19-20.

On Thursday, August 19, MV Mississippi appeared southbound out of the morning haze at Lock 25 near Winfield, Mo., to pick up a group of stakeholders in the Mississippi River's future. they spent a day underway on the river for informal discussions of navigation, flood damage reduction and environmental issues.

They were welcomed aboard by Brig. Gen. Crear and engaged in informal groups, assembling to discuss mutual interests and then parting and reassembling in other groups to follow subjects capturing their attention.

More than 30 people came aboard MV Mississippi to testify before a public hearing of the Mississippi River Commission, chaired by Brig. Gen. Robert Crear when the Commission visited the Mel Price Locks and Dam for public hearings August 20.

Upon arriving at the Melvin Price Locks and Dam that afternoon, they left the Corps' largest diesel tow boat, which also serves as its flag ship when it is not employed on Corps work projects in the southern reaches of the river. Many left with new ideas and understandings that would be useful the next day when formal hearings were held.

Friday morning at 10a.m., Brig. Gen. Crear gaveled the formal hearings into session in the conference room, forward on MV Mississippi's First Deck.

After welcomes and brief informational presentations by Commission Secretary and Division Deputy Commander, Col. Richard Jenkins; Commission President and Division Commander Brig. Gen. Crear and St. Louis District Commander Col. Kevin Williams, testimony began.

Each person wishing to speak for a group or to address their individual concerns was invited to come forward to a podium to address the Commission members present. Commission members asked presenters questions about specific details of their interests and concerns.

During the next three-plus hours, more than 30 people, ranging from an Illinois State Representative, to a College President to individual citizens addressed the commission. A group of union workers picketing the site to protest a small construction contract's handling was even invited to make a statement to the commissioners. Most presenters also provided more detailed formal written statements as well. All were told they will receive written responses and answers addressing their concerns.

Most of the speakers represented navigation or agricultural interests, but a few focused their comments on environmental concerns. They spanned the gamut from firm supporters of Corps activities to vocal critics.

In closing remarks to the attendees, Brig. Gen. Crear lauded them for coming out to express their concerns, their involvement and the breadth of their interests in work of the Mississippi River Commission and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Several hundred area citizens also braved threatening weather to take part in an open house conducted aboard MV Mississippi after the public hearings held earlier in the day.

District Receives National Award Third Time in Four Years

By Nicole Dalrymple

For the second year in a row and the third time in four years, the St. Louis District received the Department of Army's Internal Review Award of Excellence. In 2001 the award was for the outstanding IR office of one to three auditors. In 2003 and 2004 the recognition was for the newly developed one-auditor office category. The frequency with which the St. Louis District has received this prestigious IR award is uncommon and certainly noteworthy.

While the award is given to the St. Louis District, it actually honors the District's superior IR Chief, Mike Banovz. Banovz has managed the District's IR Office for 16 years.

The award was presented July 1 in Phoenix at a banquet concluding the Department of Army's Internal Review Training Symposium. Banovz and Lt. Col. Greg Raimondo, Deputy District Engineer, accepted the award from Barbara Adcox, Director of Management Services and Internal Review for the Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Financial Management and Comptroller.

For ten months during the period of April 2003 through March 2004, Banovz provided "outstanding professional audit services" for both the St. Louis District and Mississippi Valley Division, Maj. Gen. Don T. Riley, former Division Commander, stated in Banovz's nomination package. "Mike Banovz is absolutely superb," Riley wrote. "He did more than anyone is ever expected to do."

Banovz's time was almost evenly split between District and Division duties. He completed 69 engagements and projects, spending 55 percent of his available direct auditor time on MVS engagements and 45 percent on MVD audit-related engagements and projects. "His productivity level far exceeded the established Army standard of seven audit engagements per auditor per year," Riley stated.

Successfully completing all those actions would not have been possible without cooperation from St. Louis District managers and IR offices in St. Paul, Rock Island, Memphis, Vicksburg and New Orleans, Banovz said.

In all instances, he said, managers responded in a timely manner to a multitude of data calls and suspense dates. "The data processed during the period required a constant flow of information between districts, Division and headquarters," he said.

In July 2003 the District's IR Office underwent an external Quality Assurance inspection. "The overall results were exceptional," said Maj. Joe Tyron, then-acting District Engineer. "Despite his doubled IR workload in fiscal year 2003, Mike had an overall QA compliance score of 98.6 percent. Seventy percent is passing."

"Mike consistently demonstrates a strong work ethic, the highest level of integrity and a praiseworthy dedication to his responsibilities," Tyron wrote in Banovz's nomination packet. "Brig. Gen. Riley and I demonstrated our confidence in Mike's capabilities by permitting him to fill the dual-hatted role despite St. Louis being a one-auditor office."

Although the Great Lakes and Ohio River Division assumed the Mississippi Valley Division IR responsibilities Feb. 1, Banovz continues to assist MVD on a limited basis in implementing the USACE 2012 program.

Other Corps Districts receiving recognition in 2004 were Memphis District's IR Office, receiving an Award of Merit in Category B, for offices with more than one but less than four auditors, and the Louisville District's IR Office, receiving an Award of Merit in Category C, for offices with more than four auditors.

Marty Seger Writes From Duty in Iraq

Marty Seger will soon return from his 4-month deployment to Iraq, and it's been an experience of a lifetime, according to Seger.

In the St. Louis District, Seger, a licensed crane and towboat operator, spent his days repairing locks and dams and assisting onboard Dredge Potter on the Mississippi River. In Iraq, he's been flexing some different muscles.

Prior to 1995 Seger worked as a water, wastewater plant operator and supervisor, as well as a shift supervisor, for the Department of Energy's Superfund Project, which was overseeing the treatment of nuclear contaminated water and wastewater. Seger holds the highest supervisory licenses in water, wastewater and hazardous materials treatment available.

As the Water Sector Quality Assurance Manager for the USAID Projects Office (UPO), Baghdad Central District, Seger has put those skills to work in new ways.

"I've helped the Iraqi people recover from over 30 years of dictatorship, three wars and more than a decade of economic sanctions," he said. Over the years Iraq's civil infrastructure has been neglected and its water and sewer plants have fallen into disrepair, Seger explained.

As quality assurance manager, Seger has been responsible for overseeing Baghdad's water and wastewater plants, as well as a new water plant and landfill . He has worked closely with the prime contractor, Bechtel National, Inc., to ensure the work is being done as closely to American standards as possible.

In addition to making over 40 quality assurance project site inspections throughout the Baghdad area outside the heavily defended green zone, Seger supervised a team of about seven Iraqi engineers, who served as his eyes and ears at project sites. Through their efforts, Seger has been able to ensure quality of work. In some cases, Seger has been able to demonstrate the proper way to do the work and proper use of PPE and safety precautions.

Over time, Seger developed a close working relationship with the Iraqi engineers, as well as the Iraqi site engineers working for the contractor. The excellent working relationship forged between the Corps, Bechtel and USAID has led to even greater progress for Iraq's

Seger cont.next page

Seger Cont from page 9

water, wastewater infrastructure.

Seger was instrumental in assisting some Iraqi workers who expressed fear for their safety. The workers weren't being paid and were being told by plant management not to do their jobs. Seger documented the situation and met with key leaders to get the workers their back pay and protection from threats.

Help also came through Seger's actions when the Iraqi ministry made the project a high priority and assigned new managers that helped make the treatment plant a success. "I was proud to help," Seger said. "I'm grateful the workers trusted me enough to ask for help. The workers have now been paid. What was a bad situation is now over."

Seger has been instrumental in leading projects to improve the lives of the Iraqi people. For instance, prior to May 2004, all of Baghdad's sewage was dumped untreated into the Tigris River. That all changed on May 19 when sewage from Baghdad was treated for the first time in over 15 years, Seger said.

In the near future, two more wastewater plants will start operation and construction work is ongoing to restore Baghdad's main water plant. "It feels great to be part of a team that's providing Baghdad's citizens with 120 million gallons of quality water daily," Seger said. Major construction is underway to increase daily capacity an additional 68 million gallons to help meet demand.

Marty Seger and a Bechtel resident engineer collaborate during an inspection tour of the southern Baghdad sewage treatment plant.

"It's all in a day's work," Seger says. His efforts provide a sense of a job well done, and it's incredible knowing he's been part of American and Iraqi history, he said.

"I am proud to have been here with the USACE team, and I wouldn't have missed this opportunity for the world," he said.

Seger, who returned to the U.S. in September, stresses that replacements are needed in Iraq. "We need quality people to step up to the plate. It's a decision they won't regret."

The Way I Remember It

Recently, I was talking with Nicole Dalrymple about this edition of the Esprit. I try to make my articles compatible with each month's theme or lead article. She said that *Esprit* was going to lead with a story on the emergency repairs at Locks 27 and asked if I could do an article on an associated topic.

"Yep," I said, as I walked into the snack room to buy a diet Pepsi. As I dropped quarters into the soda machine that I think I personally support, I mulled over the subject: locks and dams. "Hmmmmm! Hey," I exclaimed, "I have something that not everyone may know and may find interesting" I chortled as I headed back to my darkened corner cubicle, the other people in the snack room staring at me in amazement.

So here's my story.

The structure at Clarksville, Mo. is called Lock and Dam No. 24. The structure at Winfield, Mo. is Lock and Dam No.25. The structure at Alton, Ill. is called the Melvin Price Locks and Dam (formerly Locks and Dam No. 26). Are you starting to see a pattern here? Finally, the structure at Granite City is called Locks and Dam No. 27 - right?

Wrong! There is a structure called Dam 27 and there is a structure called Locks 27. So why aren't they called Locks and Dam 27? Well, let me explain this apparent contradiction.

Let's begin with the Chain of Rocks canal and Locks No. 27. The purpose of this complex is to create a safe and dependable navigation channel around a very dangerous (and sometimes deadly) reach of river called the Chain of Rocks. This reach of river extends from approximate river mile 184.0 upstream to river mile 194.0 (the Gateway Arch is located at river mile 180.0). This reach of river had historically been very difficult to navigate and that challenge had to be solved before the entire Mississippi River could finally become a dependable avenue for commerce.

As the name - "Chain of Rocks" - implies, rock ledges stretching across the river bed were a serious hazard to navigation. It was frequently necessary, especially during times of low water, for towboats to "double trip" through the chain of rocks reach of the Mississippi River. This was especially true for towboats of small horsepower. They would have to make two runs with their barges and then remake the tows for

The low water Dam 27 is seen in the aerial view. Other prominent structures include the Homer Dam on left, two now-unused water intakes for the city of St. Louis, the old Route 66 Bridge and at the top, the newer I-270 crossing.

further north or southbound journeys.

Even relatively new steel-hulled vessels sometimes succumbed to the submerged rocks. You can well imagine how vulnerable the older wood-hulled steamboats were to the jagged rocks! Many vessels did not survive the trip through this reach of the river.

To digress a minute, the Middle Mississippi River has three areas with rock bottoms. All three have been difficult for navigation over the centuries. They are the rocks at the Chain of Rocks reach; the rocks at Grand Tower, Illinois and the rocks through Thebes Gap.

Mark Twain once wrote about the rocks at Thebes Gap: "For it is a chain of rocks admirably arranged to capture and kill steamboats on bad nights. A good many steamboat corpses lie buried there, out of sight."

But getting back specifically to the Chain of Rocks reach of the Mississippi, a canal was proposed to circumnavigate this reach of river. The project was initiated in 1946 (the year I was born). It was essentially completed in 1953. Today it is mandatory that all vessels travel through Locks 27 and the approximately ten-mile canal.

So that solved all of the problems, right? No. There was still another problem and this will explain why the low water dam - called Dam 27 - was built, almost a decade after Locks 27 were built near Granite City, Ill.

The locks and dam at Alton, Ill. (old Locks 26) were experiencing problems with inadequate water depths over the lower sill of the lock chambers at low river flows. When the combined flows of the Missouri and Mississippi Rivers dropped below 63,000 cubic feet per second, vessels could not get over the lower sill of the locks.

Between 1939 and 1956, there had been a total of 330 days when there had been less than 9 feet of water over the locks sills. The longest continuous period on record was 98 days.

Several different solutions were considered and the best solution was determined to be to build a low, broad-crested rock fill dam. This would form a barrier to ensure adequate depths upstream, even under the most adverse flow conditions. The location chosen for this structure was the segment of the river by-passed by the Chain of Rocks Canal (some of us now call this the old river). Why not? Vessel traffic was mandated to use the canal and only local traffic was using the old river. Thus, a permanent dam across that stretch would hold a pool up to Locks 26 while navigation continued via the canal and Locks 27.

Construction of the low water dam started in October 1960 and was completed in November 1962. The official completion date was 20 February 1964.

With this structure in place, river navigation has been able to proceed through the Alton Locks without lightening loads or transferring loads from barge to barge in order to lessen their draft, as was the practice in the old days during extreme low water periods. Even though Locks 26 are no longer with us - that's another story - the 40-year-old low water dam continues to serve today, performing the same service for Mel Price that it provided for the old Locks 26.

That should be the end of my item for this month. But they tell me I have a few more column inches to fill.

I think I will add a few "sound bites":

• The Chain of Rocks low water dam is the only rock fill dam in a major river in this country.

• Dam No. 27 has no engineering relationship with Locks 27. In fact, an argument could be made that says this structure should have been named Locks and Dam No. 26 auxiliary - or - Dam no. 26a. In today's nomenclature it could be called Melvin Price Dam No. 26a.

• And finally, here is an interesting engineering fact that has no relationship to anything that I am talking about in this article (This is called a tangential thought - I have a whole lot of them as I approach retirement.) The crest elevation of the low water dam and the invert elevation of the emergency overflow section of the Wappapello Dam are both 395 ft. NGVD. Since Wappapello is way down in the southern part of Missouri - how can this be? The answer is obvious to a river engineer, but I can't answer all of the questions in one story. That's a form of job security.

This reminds me of a Mark Twain quote, "Get your facts first, and then you can distort them as much as you please."

I have spent so much time on this article, it is now necessary to go get another diet Pepsi. In fact, the Pepsi vendor is standing at my door wondering where I have been.

Claude Strauser

Nationally Recognized Teens Have St. Louis District Ties

By Diadra Henley-James, ED-H

Diadra Henley-James is beaming these days, as her nephews Brandon Christian Henley and his fraternal twin brother Austin Christopher Henley have been marked this past year as two of the nation's top high school scholars and young community leaders.

Brandon was named one of Ebony magazine's top black high school seniors for 2004. A recent graduate of Central High School in Omaha, Neb., he was selected from among several thousand candidates nationwide.

A broad array of accomplishments and honors marked Brandon for his selection. Brandon is a lead mentor in his community and has chalked up over 100 volunteer hours in mentoring youth in math and science. He is also a member of the National Honor Society, the National Math Honor Society, Keys Service Club, and Minority Scholar Club.

The young scholar represented his high school at several district math contests and earned numerous honors and awards, including the Jackie Robinson Scholarship, University of Nebraska academic recognition, and Central High School Honor Roll.

Brandon wasn't all work and no play though; he lettered in academics and golf. While he is a great basketball player, playing for his high school and community, his passion is golf. He's become an avid golfer and has played in several tournaments.

During his junior year, Brandon was the only student from Omaha to participate in the pre-engineering program at Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tenn. He entered Vanderbilt this fall where he is pursuing a degree in Biomedical Engineering.

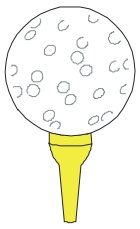
Brandon's fraternal twin brother, Austin Christopher Henley, has been lauded for his academic achievements and community involvement as well. Austin was selected to represent the United States in Greece and Italy as a sports ambassador. He too has donated over 100 volunteer hours in youth mentoring and written more than 50 poems, four of which have been published. Austin embarked on his college education as a freshman at North Carolina Central University where he is pursuing a degree in criminal justice.

Diadra Henley-James proudly shows off her two nephews, fraternal twins Brandon Christian and Austin Christopher Henley, who were both recently recognized for their academic excellence and community involvement.

The twins' parents, Chandra Henley, a CPA and Director of Finance at Union Pacific Railroad, Omaha, Neb., and Arick Henley, Systems Engineer, Lockheed Martin Aeronautical Company, Atlanta, couldn't be prouder - and neither can their aunt Diadra!

2004 Golf Season Results

The District's Corps Golf League concluded its 2004 season with its Fall Tournament held at Scott Air Force Base's Cardinal Creek Golf Course on September 16. The tournament concludes the league's eighteen-week season.



Congratulations go out to team "UDAMAN" on winning first place in the tournament. Team players are Engineering Division's Mel Baldus and John Dierker, and retirees Ken Corbin, Art Johnson, Pete Puricelli, Lee Robinson and Dave Spencer.

Other winners were:

A Flight (lower handicap golfers):

1st — Larry Wernle / Dennis Gilmore
2nd — Mel Baldus / Joe Kellett
3rd — Jerry Schwalbe / Jim Eisenhauer (IRS)

Closest to Hole #10: Joe Kellett
Closest to Hole #17: Mel Baldus
Longest Drive: Rich Mills
Least Putts: Mike Bitner (IRS)

B Flight (higher handicap golfers):

1st — Ken Corbin / Ron Lindsay
2nd — Wally Feld / Lew Scheuermann
3rd — Ron Messerli / Don Wells (IRS)

Closest to Hole #10: Ken Koller
Closest to Hole #17: Charlie Denzel
Longest Drive: Ken Corbin
Least Putts: Ken Corbin

Almost fifty former and current Corps employees make up the District's six teams. A team from the Internal Revenue Service and another from the U.S. Coast Guard make it a complete league.

Each team has eight golfers. The players rotate, sending four golfers to weekly games at the Clinton Hills Country Club in Belleville, Ill.

A new season will be kicked off with the Spring Tournament in April 2005. A notice well be sent out in February inviting new players to join.

Mark Twain Lake Hosts The Wall That Heals

General Mills Employees in Hannibal, Mo. know no limits when it comes to patriotism. Their generous donation brought *The Wall That Heals*, a dramatic half-scale replica of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington DC, to Mark Twain Lake on June 10-13, 2004.

The "Wall" was open at the M.W. Boudreaux Visitor Center 24-hours a day beginning with opening ceremonies. A color guard from Fort Leonard Wood opened the exhibit along with a Vietnam Era helicopter flyover by the Missouri State Highway Patrol. Local Vietnam Veterans were acknowledged with a seat of honor during the ceremony.

The Wall That Heals is an exhibition featuring a 250-foot replica of the original Memorial in Washington, DC and travels across America to major cities and small towns, speaking not only of the nation's loss, but of the lives of the 58,000 men and women named on The Wall who are our parents, children, neighbors and friends.

"*The Wall That Heals* transcends the Vietnam War to help our great nation renew its relationship with veterans of all wars," said Jan C. Scruggs, founder and president of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund. "It helps veterans from all wars find healing and a powerful connection through their common military experiences."

So many things still unsaid… The half-scale replica of the Vietnam Memorial continues to draw messages to loved ones who lost their lives in that conflict, as it visits the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers project at Mark Twain Lake.

In addition to the opportunity for America to honor its service members, *The Wall That Heals* allows those heroes enshrined on the Memorial to return to the places they called home, to exist among friends and family once more in the comfort and peace of familiar surroundings. Up to 12,000 people passed through the gates during the exhibit period.

It is with great pleasure the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers hosted *The Wall That Heals* at Mark Twain Lake in cooperation with General Mills Employees, the Mark Twain Lake Chamber of Commerce, local VFW Posts and other volunteers. Nearly 100 volunteers gave of their time to make the event a sucess.

4th Annual Mark Twain Lake CAST For Kids

The 4th Annual Mark Twain Lake CAST for Kids event was held July 17, 2004 at the Indian Creek Marina. CAST, which stands for Catch A Special Thrill, for Kids is an extraordinary outdoor event, which teams experienced volunteer fishermen with disabled and disadvantaged youngsters for a day of fishing enjoyment.

The Mark Twain event is one of 52 in the United States. The event is steered toward youth ages 7 and up, with little or no fishing experience. For many disabled and disadvantaged children this is the first opportunity to fish because of limitations caused by their disability. This year 25 kids enjoyed a great day of fishing with their fishing buddy with many fish being caught.

The CAST for Kids Foundation, B.A.S.S. Federations, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Leggett & Platt Aluminum Group - PACE Industries, Indian Creek Marina, Mark Twain Bass Masters, NEMO Bait Company, United Missouri Bank, Perry State Bank, Alliant Bank and C & R Markets sponsored the event.

CAST for Kids participants received a t-shirt and hat with logo, rod, reel, tackle box, photo plaque, and bait. After the fishing outing all participants and volunteers enjoyed a picnic lunch.

Fishing is for everyone. This year 25 children with disabilities came to Mark Twain Lake to enjoy this outdoor activity. Here two of them show their joy over the experience and a great picnic meal.

Nation's Top Miniature Dachshund Part of St. Louis District Family

By Nicole Dalrymple

Whether they are furry, scaly or feathery, pets are often considered part of the family. In fact pictures of family pets can often be found sitting next to pictures of spouses and children on employees' desks.

Walking between columns O13 and P13 on the third floor of the Robert A. Young Federal Building it's hard to miss Pam Reed's cubicle - the one with the dachshund motif. Dozens of pictures of her dogs, as well as pictures of dogs from magazines and calendars, dot every available space in Reed's cube.

Reed's love for dachshunds goes back to when she was a child. She recalls always wanting one for a pet but her father did not approve. She finally got her first one in the 1960s, a Christmas present from her mother the year she moved out on her own.

Reed, a civil engineering tech, and her husband Thomas Cook, a maintenance supervisor at U.S. Steel in Granite City, Ill., now have twelve dachshunds, and that's not counting the occasional litter of puppies. Cook affectionately refers to the dogs as the "thundering herd."

While all the dogs are allowed in the house, only three to four are indoors all the time. The others rotate in and out of dog kennels located on the family's 5-acre property in Troy, Ill.

"It's good to have acreage where they can run," Reed said. "When I get home I spend at least an hour feeding the dogs, cleaning their kennels and letting them run. We also raise goats and the dogs love to herd them."

Reed's passion for dachshunds goes beyond just owning them as pets. She and her husband also breed and show the dogs. "I started showing dachshunds in the 90s, and I bred my first litter in 1999," she said. She originally started with two dachshunds, but after keeping three puppies from her first litter, and so on with subsequent litters, she's arrived at her now twelve dogs. "You breed to better the breed," she said, "and one of the benefits is you can chose to keep the best if you want."

And keeping the best involves looking for quality dogs. In the competitions Reed enters, the judges are looking at confirmation. "The judges watch to see if the dogs move right, what their stature is, and how they stand," she explained. "Dogs from quality breeders are structurally sound. They don't have as many bone problems or medical problems."

You don't have to be tall to be good – even great! Here Pam Reed shows her top "short dog," miniature wire-haired dachshund Patty Cakes and her awards garnered in national competition in Columbia, Ind., in August.

Reed shows the dogs in confirmation and her husband Cook does the field trials. Field trials judge how accurately the dog tracks the scent of a rabbit. Other categories the dogs could eventually be entered into are tracking, obedience and agility.

Right now six of their twelve dogs are champions in confirmation and two are dual champions in confirmation and field.

Most recently Reed's newest dog, Patty Cakes, a miniature wirehaired, won 'Best Bitch,' 'Best of Winners,' and highest scoring miniature at the National Miniature Dachshund Club Expo/ Roundup in Columbia, Ind., on August 5-8.

"This win makes her the top miniature in the country," Reed said with a smile.

There's no doubt that when one of Reed's dogs wins a competition she wins too. It's a validation of a lot of time, effort and investment. "It's like a dream Patty Cakes winning best in class," she said. "I was so proud of her."

At the national competition sponsored by the Louisville Dachshund Club, Patty Cakes competed alongside three hundred other dachshunds. "I like going to the specialty shows where there's just one breed," Reed said. "The best wins come at specialty shows because you're drawing from the best around the country."

Amazingly, Reed has only had Patty Cakes since January, and prior to August's big win she had placed second in three previous competitions.

Showing dogs is a lot of hard work, Reed said. "My husband and I do all three: raising, breeding and showing. Some people hire handlers, which costs a lot of money, but we like to show the dogs ourselves."

Reed's next goal is to place in the group ring, where her dogs would compete against other breeds. "A friend of mine who is an AKC judge said there are lots of champions but few specials. Specials are dogs that do consistently well. That's what I'm striving for, to not only have champions but to have specials."

Retiree's Corner

St. Louis District retirees met for their monthly luncheon.

The retirees' luncheon is held the third Thursday of every month, approximately 11 a.m.

Lew Scheuermann said he recently met the "new" District Engineer, Colonel Kevin Williams — back from a seven-month deployment to Iraq — during golf league. (Lew was probably busy practicing getting out of sand traps.) Lew said Colonel Williams, who's busy getting resettled into the District, kind of downplayed his mission in Iraq. The Colonel did say that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has done a considerable amount of work on the country's infrastructure and in providing medical and school facilities. For the luncheon, Lew brought along a copy of the recent St. Louis Post-Dispatch article on Colonel Williams.

Lew also mentioned that Jim Baker and his wife Celeste were in town to visit family and friends. Jim looks great and said that he doesn't play as much golf as he did before. (Maybe he feels that he has finally mastered the game and doesn't need to practice as much.) The Bakers were going to Kansas City, Mo., to visit with Estelle Huizenga, before going back to California.

Joe Bisher was his normal self, full of stories. He said that the color guard from the American Legion, which he is associated with, were going to the AARP meeting at the citizens center on Revis Barracks Road. Joe is always promoting veterans groups for their contributions to the cause of freedom. Joe had not seen the article on Col. Williams and asked to take it with him for his AARP presentation.

Don Wampler asked the group if anyone had "surplus electricity." Seems the severe storm the week before knocked out power in his neighborhood. He was without power for three days. Fortunately he had not forgotten how to do things around the house the old fashion way — manually. Just as he was calling Bob Maxwell his power came back on. Don said it was quite an experience going without power for so long.

FLASHBACK
July 1969

About 45 District employees had the pleasure of traveling aboard the Dredge KENNEDY from the Service Base to Alton, Ill. The trip was interesting and delicious.

The 194th birthday of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers was duly noted with ceremonies and a speech by Col. Decker at the Stadium Cinema. Lengths of Service Awards were presented at the ceremonies. Also at this event, Marshall Gray, the retired Chief of the Technical Liaison Office, was honored when he was elected to the District's all-time Gallery of Distinguished Employees. Mr. Gray was the ninth person so honored. Col. Decker reviewed his outstanding record from 1923 to 1963. One of the highlights was his receipt of the Meritorious Civilian Service Award from the Secretary of the Army in 1963 for the achievement of outstanding results in the field of public relations.

New employees included: Phillip Jenkins, Thomas Freeman, John Vento, Phillip Eydmann, and Charles Turlin. Summer employees included: Ronald Viehweg, Thomas Wolff, Paul Schmidt and Daniel Spellman.

Four District employees were recognized for running in the YMCA fitness program:

- Tom Mudd ..... 100 miles
- Bill Taphorn ..... 200 miles
- Marv Ortwerth ..... 600 miles
- Abbie Best ..... 2000 miles

Several District employees were camping under the stars at Carlyle Lake July 21, 1969, the day man first walked on the moon.

Paul Schmidt Says Good-bye

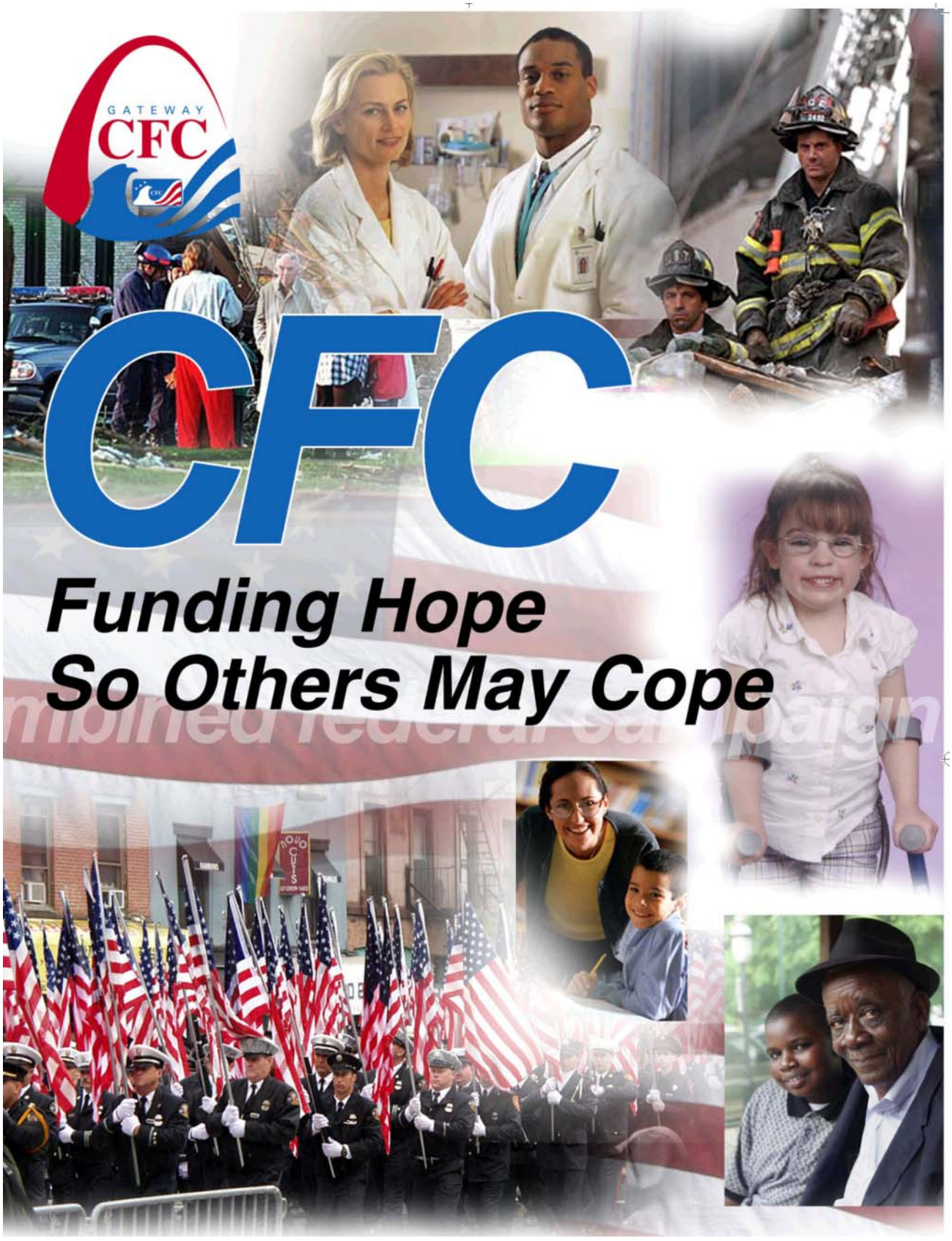
1967 seems like yesterday...reporting to the Service Base as a GS-2 Co-Op student on a Corps survey crew the day after my high school graduation...wielding a brush-clearing machete in stifling heat and humidity so we could survey the centerline of the future Mark Twain Lake dam. I never could have projected the wonderful 37 years I've spent working with the Corps...a career that took me through major Corps' functional areas in Engineering, Military and Civil Works Construction and Operations. I was fortunate enough to teach Corps construction courses around the globe for 20 years, giving me an up-close appreciation of the Corps' world-wide mission and our impact on that world. Each of my 37 years with the Corps have been intense and challenging but immensely satisfying.

Unplanned surprises happen at the end of every fiscal year...my particular surprise was learning my VSIP retirement request was approved a scant 4 days before the end of FY04. That means I had to retire before October 1st without the opportunity to properly say good-bye to many of those who made my Corps career so professionally fulfilling and personally happy.

My wish for them is to enjoy and be proud of their present or past career of service every day. Know that whatever challenges we encounter, ultimately it is our desire to excel, our willingness to work together and our commitment to give whatever it takes that will lead both us and the Corps to personal and professional success. Our Corps' motto Essayons is the shortened version of Toujours essayons notre meilleur...let us always try our best.

I plan to continue my professional engineering career and relish the thought of new challenges, but confess that saying good-bye to friends and acquaintances in the Corps family is difficult. While I hope to see many of you again, for now allow me to echo the end of Jack Buck's broadcasts: "So long for just a while..."

Paul Schmidt



The St. Louis District CFC campaign continues thru November 19th.